

Saber Arch Questions and Answers

Q: Can there be a saber arch at a Catholic wedding ceremony? Can there be a saber arch at a Nuptial Mass?

A: There can most definitely be a saber arch after a Catholic wedding ceremony, even if the celebration is a nuptial mass. The saber arch takes place after the religious ceremony.

Q: Is it appropriate to have the arch of sabers inside the sanctuary or is it strictly an outdoor event? How is the saber arch conducted in the event of inclement weather?

A: Most saber arches take place outside the church or chapel. The wedding guests exit the church and wait outside for the bride and groom. The bride and groom pass under the arch of sabers just as they are exiting the church. It is a great moment for all!

The arch of sabers may also take place inside the church with the permission of your clergyman. This might be a good idea in the event of inclement weather.

Q: The bridal party is also requesting a string quartet to provide the ceremony music. Is this something that has to be approved by the individual pastor?

A: The music really has nothing to do with the saber arch (i.e., it is not done in coordination with music) — you should discuss your music desires for the wedding ceremony with your pastor and/or the church's music director.

Q: Do officers typically have their active duty military friends act as the saber bearers or is that a function provided by other soldiers from their duty post? Can members of different branches of the service act as members of the same saber arch detail, or are they to be members of the same branch?

A: Military grooms must find their own saber bearers; they typically ask their officer friends to serve as saber bearers. These officers do not have to be from the same branch. Usually, there are 4 to 8 saber bearers. However, the arch can be done with as few as two saber bearers.

Q: Are there several options for the saber bearer's dress uniforms? My daughter wants a formal evening wedding, and we are probably looking at 200 guests. Which uniform would be appropriate in this venue?

A: For a formal evening wedding, military officers (Army) would wear either the Dress Blue uniform or the Dress Mess uniform. The former is a required uniform - the latter is one that officers often purchase later in their careers.